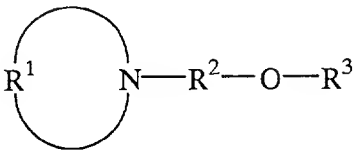
CLAIMS:

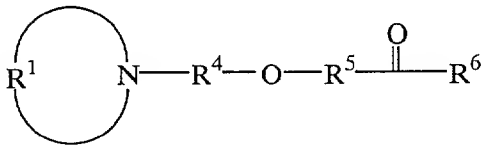
1. An amine compound of the following general formula (1):



(1)

wherein R^1 is a straight or branched alkylene group of 2 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain at least one carbonyl, ether, ester or sulfide group, R^2 is a straight or branched alkylene group of 1 to 10 carbon atoms, R^3 is a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl or alkoxy group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain a hydroxy group, ether group, carbonyl group, ester group, lactone ring or carbonate group, and R^2 and R^3, taken together, may form a ring with the oxygen atom.

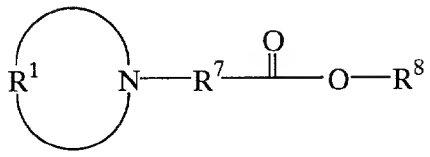
2. An amine compound of the following general formula (2):



(2)

wherein R^1 is a straight or branched alkylene group of 2 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain at least one carbonyl, ether, ester or sulfide group, R^4 is a straight or branched alkylene group of 1 to 10 carbon atoms, R^5 is a single bond or a straight, branched or cyclic alkylene group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, and R^6 is hydrogen or a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl or alkoxy group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain a hydroxy group, ether group, carbonyl group, ester group, lactone ring or carbonate group.

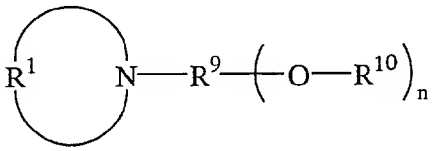
3. An amine compound of the following general formula (3):



(3)

wherein R^1 is a straight or branched alkylene group of 2 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain at least one carbonyl, ether, ester or sulfide group, R^7 is a straight or branched alkylene group of 1 to 10 carbon atoms, R^8 is a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain a hydroxy group, ether group, carbonyl group, ester group, lactone ring or carbonate group, and R^7 and R^8, taken together, may form a ring with the COO.

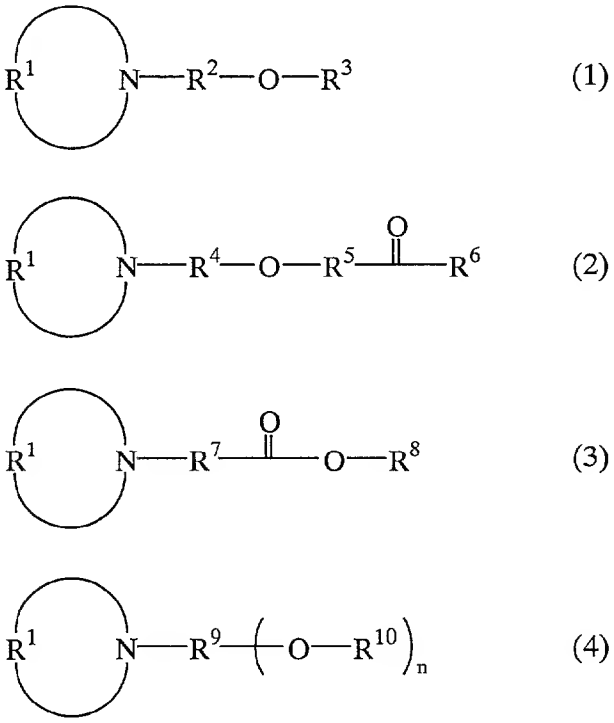
4. An amine compound of the following general formula (4):



(4)

wherein R^1 is a straight or branched alkylene group of 2 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain at least one carbonyl, ether, ester or sulfide group, R^9 is a (n+1)-valent organic group of 2 to 10 carbon atoms, R^{10} which may be the same or different is hydrogen or a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl or alkoxy group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain a hydroxy group, ether group, carbonyl group, ester group, lactone ring or carbonate group, and n is equal to 2, 3 or 4.

5. A resist composition comprising at least one of amine compounds of the following general formulae (1) to (4):



wherein R^1 is a straight or branched alkylene group of 2 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain at least one carbonyl, ether, ester or sulfide group,

R^2, R^4 and R^7 each are a straight or branched alkylene group of 1 to 10 carbon atoms,

R^3 and R^6 each are a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl or alkoxy group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain a hydroxy group, ether group, carbonyl group, ester group, lactone ring or carbonate group,

R^5 is a single bond or a straight, branched or cyclic alkylene group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms,

R^8 is a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain a hydroxy group, ether group, carbonyl group, ester group, lactone ring or carbonate group,

R^2 and R^3, taken together, may form a ring with the oxygen atom,

R^7 and R^8, taken together, may form a ring with the COO,

R^9 is a (n+1)-valent organic group of 2 to 10 carbon atoms,

R^{10} which may be the same or different is hydrogen or a straight, branched or cyclic alkyl or alkoxy group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may contain a hydroxy group, ether group, carbonyl group, ester group, lactone ring or carbonate group, and

n is equal to 2, 3 or 4.

6. A positive resist composition comprising

(A) the amine compound of claim 5,

(B) an organic solvent,

(C) a base resin having an acidic functional group protected with an acid labile group, which is normally alkali insoluble or substantially alkali insoluble, but becomes alkali soluble upon elimination of the acid labile group, and

(D) a photoacid generator.

7. The positive resist composition of claim 6 further comprising (E) a dissolution inhibitor.

8. A negative resist composition comprising

(A) the amine compound of claim 5,

(B) an organic solvent,

(C') a base resin which is normally alkali-soluble, but becomes substantially alkali insoluble when crosslinked with a crosslinker,

(D) a photoacid generator, and

(F) the crosslinker capable of crosslinking under the action of acid.

9. A process for forming a resist pattern comprising the steps of:

applying the resist composition of claim 5 or 6 onto a substrate to form a coating,

heat treating the coating and then exposing it to high-energy radiation having a wavelength of less than 300 nm or electron beams through a photo mask, and

optionally heat treating the exposed coating and developing it with a developer.